

Exhibit 34

Dear Judge Durkin,

I am Joseph Ritchie, Founder and CEO of Chicago Research and Trading (CRT).

I have known Denny for about 20 years. When we met, he was Speaker. A friend in DC introduced us, because my friend thought my project was worthy, and that Denny would want to use his influence to move it forward, even though I had never been a contributor to his campaigns. I was working on a plan to bring the former King of Afghanistan back to the country, and so undermine the Taliban. As it turned out, we needed some cooperation from Washington, particularly in Congress. First (in about 2000-2001), he supported our efforts to bring back the King, and later, to work with past commanders to overthrow the Taliban. When this was disrupted by 9/11, he became our main link to keep the State Department and the Defense Department in the loop. Much later, when the last election in Afghanistan was stolen, and mass violence was at hand, he became part of the team that influenced John Kerry to pressure the Afghans into a coalition government, and so avoid a high probability of major civil violence. All this he did as a simple civic minded citizen. There was no political or financial benefit. Whenever we needed his help, we just asked for it, and he pitched in, never asking for anything in return.

In 2003, I met the President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, and started a program to introduce him to the private sector. But I decided to give him an entre to DC as well, and so asked Denny to come to my home and have breakfast with Kagame, which he did. He then set up a lunch in the Speaker's quarters with the Chairs of about 6 House Committees, without being asked. He became one of the main links between Washington and Rwanda, simply because he believed that it was the right thing to do.

In 2011, he basically did the same thing for Joyce Banda, who became President of Malawi the next year. He was no longer Speaker; but he was still willing to plug away in any way he could to help a cause or a person that he believed in.

Later, I served on the Board of the Hastert Center at Wheaton College. There I witnessed this old man, often limping because of a wounded foot, still plugging away to bring to the students some real world insight into the intersection of politics and economics. And this went far beyond just being a celebrity. You could feel the teacher's passion he had for helping students see how the real world works.

It's one thing to list the things a guy did. Much more important to me was the attitude with which he did them. He was almost a cartoon of the simple, blunt, straightforward public servant. This is something that you can feel in the air, just being around a person. Whatever issues he may have had decades earlier, the person that he became later was remarkably straight, committed, hardworking, and selfless. It's no coincidence that his colleagues, when faced with the need to put an honorable guy in as Speaker, turned to Denny. They may not have a window into what a man was decades earlier; but they know what he has become. And they picked Denny out of 200+ Congressmen. It was a great choice. And, when the two-term limit as Speaker came up, they waived it, because they had Denny. Another wise choice.

The Denny Hastert I have known and worked with for two decades is a man that I wish we had more of. I'm proud to call him my friend.

Sincerely,


Joseph Ritchie